



Watershed Action Alliance

*of Southeastern
Massachusetts*

watershedaction.org



Protecting water and
natural resources in
Southeastern
Massachusetts



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Members & Friends

Barnstable Clean Water
Coalition

Herring Ponds
Watershed Association

Jones River Watershed
Association

Monponsett Watershed
Association

Neponset River
Watershed Association

North and South Rivers
Watershed Association

Save the Bay –
Narragansett Bay

Six Ponds Improvement
Association

Weir River Watershed
Association

Reconnecting Our Rivers and Estuaries

Fish such as herring, smelt and eels must travel between the ocean and freshwater along rivers and streams to complete their life cycles, that is, to live and reproduce. Dams, many of which are obsolete and in poor repair, are big obstacles to aquatic wildlife. Removing dams and restoring rivers improves fisheries and recreation, decreases stagnant water and associated mosquito-borne illness, and increases safety.

Southeastern MA watershed associations, towns, and their local, state and federal partners have been leaders in Massachusetts in improving stream connectivity. Critical funding and assistance have been provided by the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and its agencies.

Success Stories

- Removed dams and restored rivers, opening up miles of river for fish and other wildlife, as well as human enjoyment (Jones River, Neponset, North and South, Save the Bay).
- Monitor herring for comparison before and after dam removal or fish ladder replacement (Herring Ponds, Jones River, Neponset, North and South).
- Improved fish ladders/fishways. When dam removal is not feasible, fish passage can be increased with better (or new) fish ladders or fishways, adding miles of river and stream for use as habitat. (Save the Bay).
- Advocate for superfund designation of lower Neponset for removal of PCBs, and, ultimately, removal of two major dams (Neponset).
- With the Department of Marine Fisheries, installed a fishway to restore diadromous fish habitat to glacial headwaters, Silver Lake (Jones River).
- Designated the Taunton River as Wild and Scenic (Save the Bay and partners).

What Can Legislators Do?

Prioritize Div. of Ecological Restoration funding (item 2300-0101). While an increase of \$500K to \$2.6M (from \$2.1M in FY20, including a \$100K earmark) would be ideal, we urge at least level funding of this item. DER oversees dam removals, culvert replacements, streamflow restoration, saltmarsh restoration and urban river revitalization across Massachusetts. These facilitate movement of fish, wildlife and water. By helping towns improve infrastructure with larger, safer structures and configurations, DER increases resilience to increased precipitation and more intense storms due to climate change.

Contact your district's watershed associations or Watershed Action Alliance for more information on the importance of reconnected waterways, current projects, and the many benefits of them to local communities.

Thanks to our sponsors



Thanks also to our donors - Wildlands Trust, Savery Pond Conservancy, Monponsett Watershed Association, Plymouth League of Women Voters, Taunton River Watershed Alliance, and Jones River Watershed Association.